



# *Milwaukee County*

## Supervisor Eyon Biddle, Sr., 10<sup>th</sup> District

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### **SUPPORTING SEN. TAYLOR'S EFFORTS TO BAN THE BOX**

**Milwaukee, WI** – Milwaukee County Supervisor Eyon Biddle, Sr., is publicly supporting State Senator Lena Taylor's effort to “ban the box” at the State level. “Ban the box” legislation enables job seekers with criminal pasts to clear the first barrier to employment and demonstrate their skills, abilities and evidence of rehabilitation to prospective employers.

Earlier this year, the County Board adopted a resolution authored by Supervisor Biddle to remove questions related to prior conviction and pending criminal charges from the initial job application for Milwaukee County employment, develop a policy for uniform background checks on all candidates selected for hire, and encourage the State of Wisconsin and all public and private employers to follow Milwaukee County's lead.

“I led the fight on ban the box here at the County level. Now, we need to focus our efforts on Senator Taylor's legislation at the State,” Supervisor Biddle said. “I thank her for her commitment to this crucial issue.”

Instead of advancing Senate Bill 207, which makes it easier for employers to discriminate against individuals with felony convictions, Sup. Biddle believes the Legislature should instead adopt Senator Taylor's Senate Bill 309. “I am calling on the Senate's Committee on Labor, Public Safety and Urban Affairs to hold a public hearing on the bill, so it can be considered when the Legislature returns to the floor in 2012,” he said.

“There have been some similar discussions at the City of Milwaukee. It would be great if they follow suit as well with this valuable progressive reform to limit discrimination in the hiring process and provide equal opportunities to all job seekers,” Supervisor Biddle added. “Every unit of government, along with non-profit, faith-based, and community organizations, should support this legislation. It's pivotal to local job growth. We all know that discrimination still goes on. Banning the box diminishes discrimination and allows individuals to at least have a fair interview process.”

“Ultimately, we need to spur a larger discussion about hiring reforms in general. Minorities, women, and ex-offenders are disproportionately left out of jobs. We must develop a comprehensive plan to limit all forms of discrimination. We need to keep the pressure on defeating SB 207 and supporting SB 309. We have to be aggressive in tackling this problem every step of the way.”

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